

MINEHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



R E P O R T

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1962



The Registrar General's figure for the population of the town is 7,520; the figure for 1961 was 7,490. It is probable that during the summer holidays this figure is more than doubled. The seasonal increase usually commences in June and continues until September. There are also minor variations at Easter and Christmas. The large majority of the hotels, boarding houses and apartments close down for the winter months.

WATER SUPPLY


The water supply of Minehead during the year 1962 was satisfactory. The supply itself has caused no anxiety and it is of good quality. The accompanying table of the examination of specimens taken from widely different parts of the supply demonstrates its excellence bacteriologically and chemically.

The sufficiency of the supply was complicated by a new factor which had to be considered and legislated for in the establishment of the water supply for the new Holiday Camp of Butlin's Limited. The visiting population of this establishment, estimated to be somewhere over 5,000, would require adequate water for ordinary domestic purposes, cleanliness, bathing accommodation, swimming, baths, sports and decorations. This would be in addition to the normal increase by visitors brought by the summer holidays. This sudden increase in the summer population had to be realised and arrangements made to meet it. Various matters of storage and distribution, as well as source of supply, needed careful consideration. This it received and an agreement was signed on the Surveyor's assurance that it could be done between Butlin's Limited and the Council. This was made possible by the completion of the Moor Brake borehole in August 1962.

In July Butlin's Limited notified the Council that they had obtained, and would be using their own water supply, and this started to function in July 1962. This put the tax on the Minehead water undertaking for the Camp, and the ordinary increased demand due to summer visitors well within the scope of their arrangements. It has been realised for some time that the increased demands on the water undertaking had made the maintenance of pressure in the higher parts of the town difficult. Increased building, and the taking over of further responsibilities has rendered it necessary that the matter should be dealt with without further delay. After considerable discussion it was decided that a further service reservoir for distribution at a reasonable height to maintain sufficient pressure to satisfy the demand at all times must be undertaken.

Late in 1961 a site for this reservoir was found in Higher Hopcott and negotiations completed, and the necessary documents sent to the Council's Solicitors for sealing. Tenders for the work on this reservoir, and the new mains necessitated for its service, were invited on the advice of Messrs. Cotterell & Sons, and these were allocated to Messrs. Lawson for the trunk mains, and the Tilbury Construction Company for the service reservoir; the whole expenditure amounting to £36,700. The work on these undertakings was commenced in August 1962, and the date of completion finally fixed for August 1963, this being a later date than originally anticipated owing to postponement due to weather, and other difficulties arising therefrom, stopping continuous work. To add to the complications the Water Board is due to take over the Minehead undertaking on the 1st April, 1963. The whole of the Hopcott scheme will, however, still remain the responsibility of the Urban District Council of Minehead until it is entirely finished. When this termination is achieved the bogey of insufficient pressure in the higher parts of the town should be entirely laid.

RAW WATER				TREATED AFTER GOING INTO SUPPLY			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical	
Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory	Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory
40	18	6	-	53	4	-	-



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The water is supplied to the public direct from the mains, either direct to the houses or by means of standpipes. It will be seen from the accompanying table the manner of its distribution.

Number of Dwelling Houses	DIRECT TO THE HOUSES			BY MEANS OF STANDPIPES		
	Public	Water Companies	Private	Public	Water Companies	Private
	2,680	-	8	10	-	-

#### SWIMMING POOLS

There are three in number; the Minehead Swimming Pool which is privately owned and is filled with sea water; two which are the property of the Holiday Camp and are filled with fresh water from the Camp supply. The treatment adopted to maintain their purity is the same in all cases, that is re-circulation, filtration and automatic chlorination.

To ensure that the quality of the water is maintained, samples are taken frequently. These ensure that the degree of chlorination is maintained and there is no trace of bacterial infection. Frequent testing indicated that in all the pools a safe bathing water was maintained. The filtration and chlorination plants are under skilled management and the engineer is available the whole of the time the baths are in operation. The efficiency of the management of the pools has at no time given rise to anxiety.

The Public Health Inspector is in constant touch with the Holiday Camp and his reports are satisfactory with regard to all aspects of its administration.

Medical and surgical casualties are dealt with adequately, and to our satisfaction, by qualified members of the medical profession.

#### SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

In last year's report on drainage and sewerage it was pointed out that a plan for dealing with this problem had been approved in principle. A new factor in the establishment of the Holiday Camp created certain difficulties in the existing sewerage system, and have been overcome for a limited period pending a comprehensive scheme.

The position was discussed in the Council and a delegation put the matter before the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. On their recommendation the Council decided to go forward on the lines of first deciding which part of the plan, flooding or beach pollution, should receive the first attention, and at the same time the financial difficulties be clarified before taking matters further with the Ministry.

It would seem then that in my last report, like the prophet of old "I opened my mouth and spake foolishly"; indeed there is still work to be done before all the difficulties are overcome and 'finis' written to this sad episode in Minehead's search for cleanliness.

At the present time further progress is at a standstill, and it will remain in abeyance until the financial position is resolved.

#### SLAUGHTERHOUSE

In my previous report the Public Abattoir in Minehead came to an end. The manner of its passing was dealt with in that report, only one firm of butchers requiring the slaughterhouse, the others making their own arrangements outside the area. The various steps of finding a site, passing the plans and building were ultimately dealt with. A satisfactory agreement was reached between the butchers in question, Messrs. Townsend & Son, of Park Street, Minehead, and the Council's representatives. The building is



situated in Mart Road, and on its completion inspected by members of the Council accompanied by the Public Health Inspector. It received entire approbation. Its compliance with the requirements of the Ministry was certified by Mr. Symes, the Public Health Inspector. Certain regulations in the working of the abattoir have to be carried out as to the maintenance of cleanliness, avoidance of unnecessary cruelty, handling of meat, storage and such other directions as are required by the Ministry. The supervision and observance are in the charge of the Public Health Inspector.

On my inspection of the slaughterhouse with the Public Health Inspector I found no fault and was agreeably surprised to find how much had been done to minimise the unpleasantness of this very necessary process while still maintaining its efficiency in all directions.

#### PUBLIC CLEANSING

This is carried out by the employees of the Council using two special motor vehicles. The collections are made weekly. Trade refuse is removed under a scheme by which a charge is made of 6d. a bin. Alternatively the trader may deliver his own refuse at the tip.

The refuse thus received at the tip is spread and covered with available soil and packed and levelled; this to prevent annoyance to the surrounding locality.

The tip itself is situated at the western end of Quay West. A very considerable area of waste land has been treated in this manner and has raised this to several feet above beach level.

The available area that has been dealt with thus is now coming to an end and either another site for a tip must be found or another method of dealing with waste garbage.

You have been deliberating this matter for some time and have fully weighed the pros and cons of the various possible procedures, but I think the knowledge that you have not unlimited time should be taken into consideration. Matters such as these are not made easier by delaying decisions until it becomes a matter of emergency. Whatever your decision it would doubtless take some time to implement, and time is very definitely in this case a dwindling factor.

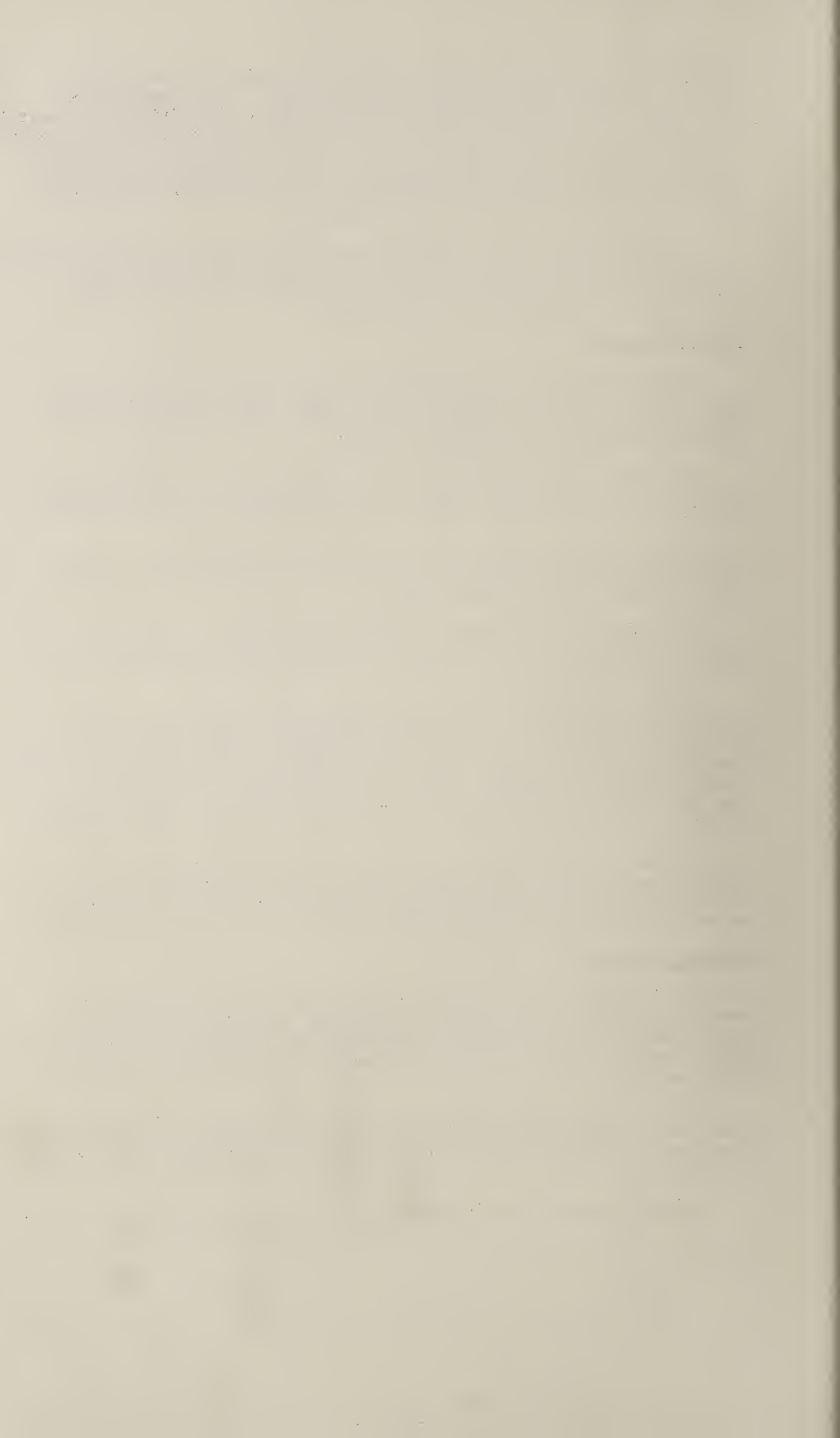
I recommend therefore that you will give it your consideration and would perhaps remember that the area which has been dealt with in this manner in due time will become a valuable asset and capable of being developed into an addition to the amenities of the town.

#### MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

Meat is prepared for human food at the slaughterhouse from where it is distributed locally. So far as it is practical, all animals are inspected before slaughter, and all carcasses and offal are inspected in accordance with instructions laid down in Memorandum 62 Foods, and appropriate action taken when required.

All places where food is prepared, etc., including the slaughterhouse, shops, stalls and vehicles, are inspected from time to time and action taken as required. Generally the cleanliness of these establishments and vehicles is satisfactory.

A list of premises used in this context, in alphabetical order, follows:-





Bakehouses ... ..	1	Dairy Shops ... ..	3
Bakers' Shops ... ..	3	Fishmongers ... ..	4
Butchers ... ..	8	Fried Fish Shops ... ..	2
Cafes ... ..	17	Fruiterers and Greengrocers ... ..	9
Chemists ... ..	4	Grocers ... ..	31
Clubs, etc. ... ..	8	Hostels ... ..	1
Canteens ... ..	2	Hotels with Restaurants ... ..	11
Church Halls ... ..	6	Hotels, Residential	43
Confectioners ... ..	8	Licensed Premises ... ..	9
Dairies ... ..	1	Pie Factory ... ..	1
		Restaurants ... ..	6

The number of inspections given to these premises was 641 during the year.

The care, cleanliness and compliance with the Food Hygiene Regulations of these premises was found to be satisfactory.

MEAT INSPECTION, 1962  
CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during year:-

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	319	-	33	1,964	772	-
Number Inspected	319	-	33	1,964	772	-
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	5	-	-	3	28	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	1.5%	-	-	0.1%	3.7%	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	2	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	1.1%	-
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:-	All animals					
(a) Tuberculosis	95	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Cysticercosis	-	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Other	134	-	-	-	-	-
Total (in lbs.) condemned	229	-	-	-	-	-



MILK

The milk supply during the year was satisfactorily maintained. Samples were taken from time to time by the County Milk Sampling Officers.

- (a) The total number of Registered Distributors was five.
- (b) The total number of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms) was one.

MANUFACTURE OF ICE CREAM

The regulations governing this manufacture and the requirements implicit in them have tended to restrict the preparation of ice cream to the large wholesale houses. The distributors find it more profitable to purchase their ice cream in bulk.

The number of premises registered for:-

Manufacture and Retail	...	...	8
Manufacture only	...	...	0
Retail only	...	...	50

HOUSING

The total number of houses is 2,698. During the year 12 houses were erected by the Local Authority and 21 by Private Enterprise. Twenty one houses were in course of erection by private enterprise at the close of the year.

The total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year was approximately 129.

There was no case of overcrowding.

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April 1945 to 31st December, 1962			Housing Programme for 1963		
By Local Authority		By Private Enterprise	For slum clearance	For other purposes	
255		245	-	-	
No. of permanent dwellings in District as at 31/12/61 (a)	Gained from conversions and erected during 1962 (b)	Total (a) - (b)	Less houses demolished, closed, etc. during year	No. of permanent dwellings in district as at 31/12/62	
				L.A.	P.E.
L.A. 347	12	359	-	359	-
P.E. 2,318	21	2,339	-	-	2,339
Totals 2,665	33	2,698	-		

OLD PEOPLE'S DWELLINGS

Number erected to 31.12.62		No. in course of erection		Number of Applicants for Old People's Dwellings
With County Council Aid	Without County Council Aid	With County Council Aid	Without County Council Aid	
-	40 (included in Post-War houses above)	-	-	55 (included in the figure for 129 applications for Council Houses)





IMPROVEMENT GRANTS: Discretionary

Number of applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority during year:-

Received		Approved	
Applications	No. of Dwellings	Applications	No. of Dwellings
3	3	2	2

Number of applications approved in respect of owner-occupiers during the year:- 2.

Average cost per dwelling approved during year ... £434

Amount of grant payable by Local Authority ... £434

IMPROVEMENTS GRANTS: Standard

1. Number of applications (a) Received ... 18  
(b) Approved ... 16

2. Number of Houses where Standard Amenities have been provided ... 17

NOTE: Number of applications approved in respect of owner-occupiers during year ... 13

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 TO 1959PART 1 OF THE ACT

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspector).

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	9	8	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	56	72	1	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises) ...	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	65	80	1	-

2. Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness ...	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding ... ..	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-	-



Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Ineffective drainage of floors ... ..	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences:					
(a) Insufficient ... ..	1	2	-	1	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work) ... ..	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1	2	-	1	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Outwork

Nature of work	No. of out-workers in August list required by Section 110 (1)(c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing } Making apparel } etc.	2	-	-	-	-	-
} Cleaning						
} and						
} Washing						
TOTAL	2	-	-	-	-	-

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Infectious diseases show a big decrease on the previous year which is a matter for satisfaction considering the inclement weather which largely prevailed.

The number of notifiable diseases for the year was 22, compared with 349 for 1961. The cases notified were all of a mild type and there were no deaths associated with them.

Cases requiring institutional treatment are sent to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Disinfection of premises after infectious diseases is carried out by the Local Authority, also after cases of an unhygienic nature on receipt of a written request from the General Practitioner in attendance.

TUBERCULOSIS

There was one case of Tuberculosis notified; there were no deaths.

HOSPITAL

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is entirely administered by the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh Management Committee.





Local representation is supplied by the House Committee. This Committee is appointed by the Committee of Management from information supplied to it. It is empowered to make recommendations on the supervision and welfare of the Institution and its occupants to the Committee of Management. The Committee of Management is represented on the Committee by three of its members.

#### AMBULANCE SERVICE

The Transport Service for Minehead and District is carried out by the St. John Ambulance Brigade from the Minehead St. John Brigade Headquarters, under Station Officer E.S. Lamb, in accordance with an agency agreement with the Somerset County Council. Two ambulances and two sitting case vehicles are based on the Headquarters. The Station Officer has seven full-time ambulance drivers under his supervision. The Minehead Nursing Division supplies the Nursing personnel for all journeys in which a nurse is required.

To demonstrate the work performed from the Minehead Headquarters and by its personnel, I have appended the following figures:-

Miles travelled	...	...	69,783
Journeys performed	...	...	3,004
Patients conveyed	...	...	8,821
Accidents	...	...	70
Emergencies	...	...	276
Removals	...	...	8,467

In my report for 1961 I stated that the present agency agreement might cease in the near future. I can now inform you that it is known that this agreement terminates on the 31st March, 1964. Details whereby the County Council takes over the whole responsibility of the National Health Transport Services will be made known in due course.

As was stated in my last report, the Minehead Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade has its own ambulance obtained by local subscriptions, maintained and administered entirely by voluntary staff. This is available at all times as and when required. Several of the Divisional Headquarters in Somerset have also adopted this procedure. It has the dual advantage of being always available and is a great help in maintaining the efficiency of the voluntary personnel. It is their responsibility, also their pleasure as well as their duty; they will not fail.

#### CLINICS

Clinics, with the exception of Infant Welfare, are held at the Minehead and West Somerset Hospital.

#### VITAL STATISTICS

	Total	M.	F.
Live Births - Legitimate	89	42	47
Illegitimate	4	4	-

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the population ... 12.36  
 Illegitimate Live Births (per cent of total live births) ... 4.3%  
 Stillbirths ... 1  
 Stillbirths Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths ... 10.64  
 Total live and stillbirths ... 94  
 Infant Deaths (deaths under one year) ... 1

#### Infant Mortality Rates

Total Infant Deaths per 1,000 live births ... 10.75  
 Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under one week combined per 1,000 total live and stillbirths) ... 21.28  
 Maternal Mortality (including abortion) ... Nil.



				Total	M.	F.
<u>Deaths</u>	...	...	...	156	69	87

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population ... 20.74

An analysis of the vital statistics shows that the total deaths registered were 156; in 1961 the figure was 136.

The total of live births was 93, compared with 75 the previous year.

With regard to the deaths occurring in age groups, 26 occurred between 60 and 70; 110 occurred over the age of 70, and of these 47 occurred between 70 and 80; 50 between 80 and 90, and 13 at 90 or over. It would seem that of the 156 deaths only 46 failed to reach the three score years and ten.

Consideration of the causes of deaths shows that 96 deaths resulted from diseases of the circulatory system; the figure for the previous year being 81.

Of these 96 deaths, lesions of the coronary vessels of the heart number 34 and vascular lesions of the nervous system 25. There were 18 deaths due to respiratory disease. The total number of deaths from malignant diseases was 22, compared with 30 the previous year.

#### SUMMARY OF ABOVE REPORT

Water. The water supply is satisfactory and has met all its requirements. It must not be forgotten that the excellence of the Minehead Water supply is due, in some measure, to the foresight of your predecessors.

Sewerage. The sewerage is still giving you a vast deal of trouble, but the present condition is more satisfactory as to its future outlook than it has ever been before. You have a clearer idea of the future and its commitments in the task before you.

Foods. The preparation of foods and their handling and transport are under constant observation by your Public Health Inspector, and his reports are satisfactory. The premises and vehicles devoted to this work are also his particular care.

Housing. In the report this is a matter of figures which show that the demand still exceeds the supply, but there is no doubt that the housing question is improving.

Factories. The attached report of your Public Health Inspector is satisfactory.

Care of the Sick. In view of the possible changes in the Ambulance Transport that seem to be pending, it would be advisable to keep this matter under your consideration.

Vital Statistics. There is nothing calling for special comment under this heading. A general tendency points in the direction of age and climatic conditions as being responsible for the variations in the death rate rather than the presence of any particular physical disease. Taking births and deaths together practically cancels the difference on the effect upon the estimated population.

Open Spaces. Nothing but praise can be given to those responsible for the care devoted to this branch of development. No open space is too small or too large to be included in the search for the town beautiful. Good taste and artistry go hand in hand linked with good health and happy outlooks.

Minehead has not lagged behind, and the Parks Garden Walk, leading from the Minehead end of Parkhouse Road, joining the main Porlock Road at Woodside, is nearing completion, and is proving a definite addition to the amenities of the town.





The tip beyond Quay West will doubtless be available for development in its turn, and I trust that means will be found to make this end of the town as attractive as the others.

In conclusion I should like to congratulate all those who have helped in any way, be it large or small, to bring Minehead through the troublous times that have beset the Council during the period under discussion.

To the Members of the Council I wish good health to enable them to carry on the work that awaits them in the coming year, and an equally satisfactory result to their year's labours.

To my colleagues, Mr. Holman and Mr. Symes, I render my thanks for the help that they have given me whenever I have had recourse to their assistance.

A year ago I expressed my thanks to our late Clerk of the Council at the termination of my report. I would like to reiterate all that I said on that occasion, but I would like to say more.

I am very privileged to have worked with him for the past seven years. During that time I have learnt to appreciate his quality as a man and as a friend. I am grateful above all to have learnt from him something of that kindly philosophy which was with him at all times and in all circumstances. I shall always remember him, but I shall miss him.

W. BAIN, M.B., B.S., Lond.,

Medical Officer of Health,

Brook House, Minehead.

Telephone: Minehead 19.

May, 1963.





